

**TOWN OF SLAVE LAKE
PARKING STUDY
OCTOBER 1985**

**Prepared by: Alberta Municipal Affairs
Planning Branch
Lakeland Unit
Robert Knall, Planning Officer
Will Steblyk**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Executive Summary	iii
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Purpose	1
2.0 STUDY AREA	1
3.0 APPROACH	3
3.1 Timing	3
3.2 Technique	3
3.2.1 License Plate Survey	3
3.2.2 Time-in/Time-out Survey	3
3.3 Research Focus	3
3.4 Parking Supply	4
3.4.1 Actual Supply	4
3.4.2 Existing Parking vs Bylaw Requirements	6
4.0 ANALYSIS	7
4.1 Comparison with other Towns	7
4.2 Occupancy Rates	7
4.2.1 On-street Parking	10
4.2.2 Off-street Parking	10
4.2.2.1 Laneways	10
4.2.2.2 Parking Lots	10
4.3 General Occupancy Observations	12
4.4 Long Term Parking and Turnover Rates	12
4.5 Vehicle Mix	14
4.6 Out-of-Province Vehicles	14
4.7 Summary of Findings	15
5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS	16
5.1 Time Limits	16
5.2 Long Term Parking Areas	16
5.3 Improvements to Existing Parking Lots	16
5.4 Town Library Lot	19
5.5 Main Street Parking Lot	19
5.6 Signage	19
5.6.1 Town Lots	19
5.6.2 Private Lots	19
5.7 On-street Parking	19
5.8 Parking Levy Bylaw	20
6.0 CONCLUSIONS	21

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1 - Study Area	2
Figure 2 - Existing Parking	5
Figure 3 - Peak Hour Occupancy Rates Thursday, June 28, 1985, 1:00 PM	8
Figure 4 - Peak Hour Occupancy Rates Friday, June 29, 1985, 3:00 PM	9
Figure 5 - Prime Demand Areas	11
Figure 6 - Recommendations: Short Term Actions	17
Figure 7 - Recommendations: Longer Term Actions	18

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 - Existing Parking Inventory	4
Table 2 - Time-in/Time-out Survey Results	13

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the request of the Town, Alberta Municipal Affairs Planning Branch staff conducted a parking study in downtown Slave Lake in June of 1985. The study was in response to an apparent shortage of parking in the downtown area, and involved the collection and analysis of data relating to parking space useage. Detailed observations were made over a three day period.

The results of the study indicate that the Town experiences a shortage of parking in a small portion of the downtown during peak hours. Although there is an overall shortage of parking spaces according to current bylaw standards, the situation is eased by the availability of on-street parking spaces and Town-owned parking lots.

Some important findings of the study were:

- Actual parking supply is 908 spaces, which are provided 49% by private businesses and 51% by the Town.
- 36% of all parking spaces are located on-street.
- At the busiest time observed, the occupancy rate of the study area was 59%.
- A small portion of the downtown adjacent to Main Street (between the C.N.R. and 3rd Avenue North) experiences maximum occupancy rates during peak periods.
- 60% of long term parkers use lanes, side streets and parking lots suitable for that purpose, while 40% park in higher demand areas.
- 41% of all vehicles observed were either trucks, vans, or recreational vehicles

Recommendations

1. Time limits should be introduced to regulated parking in high demand areas.
2. Specific areas should be designated for long term parking.
3. The design, layout and signage of Town-owned and private parking lots should be examined.
4. Painted stall markings should be introduced for on-street parking spaces.
5. The Town should adopt a parking levy bylaw.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The availability of parking in downtown Slave Lake has been perceived to be problem in recent years. The growth experienced by the Town has brought increased commercial development to the downtown, and with it increased demand for existing parking spaces. It was generally agreed that Slave Lake had a shortage of downtown parking and that something had to be done to improve the situation.

In December of 1984, the Town requested the assistance of the Planning Branch of Alberta Municipal Affairs in conducting a detailed examination of parking in the downtown area. The Town recognized that it was essential to have detailed data on present levels of parking use in order to develop a strategy to remedy the situation.

Working with the Town's Downtown Parking Committee (made up of members of Town Council, Municipal Planning Commission and downtown businessmen), Planning Branch staff identified the study area (Figure 1) in which detailed parking useage surveys were to be conducted. A three day period in June 1985 was identified during which the surveys would be completed.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the study is to examine the present parking situation and to identify, through the collection and analysis of data, the issues and problems which exist.

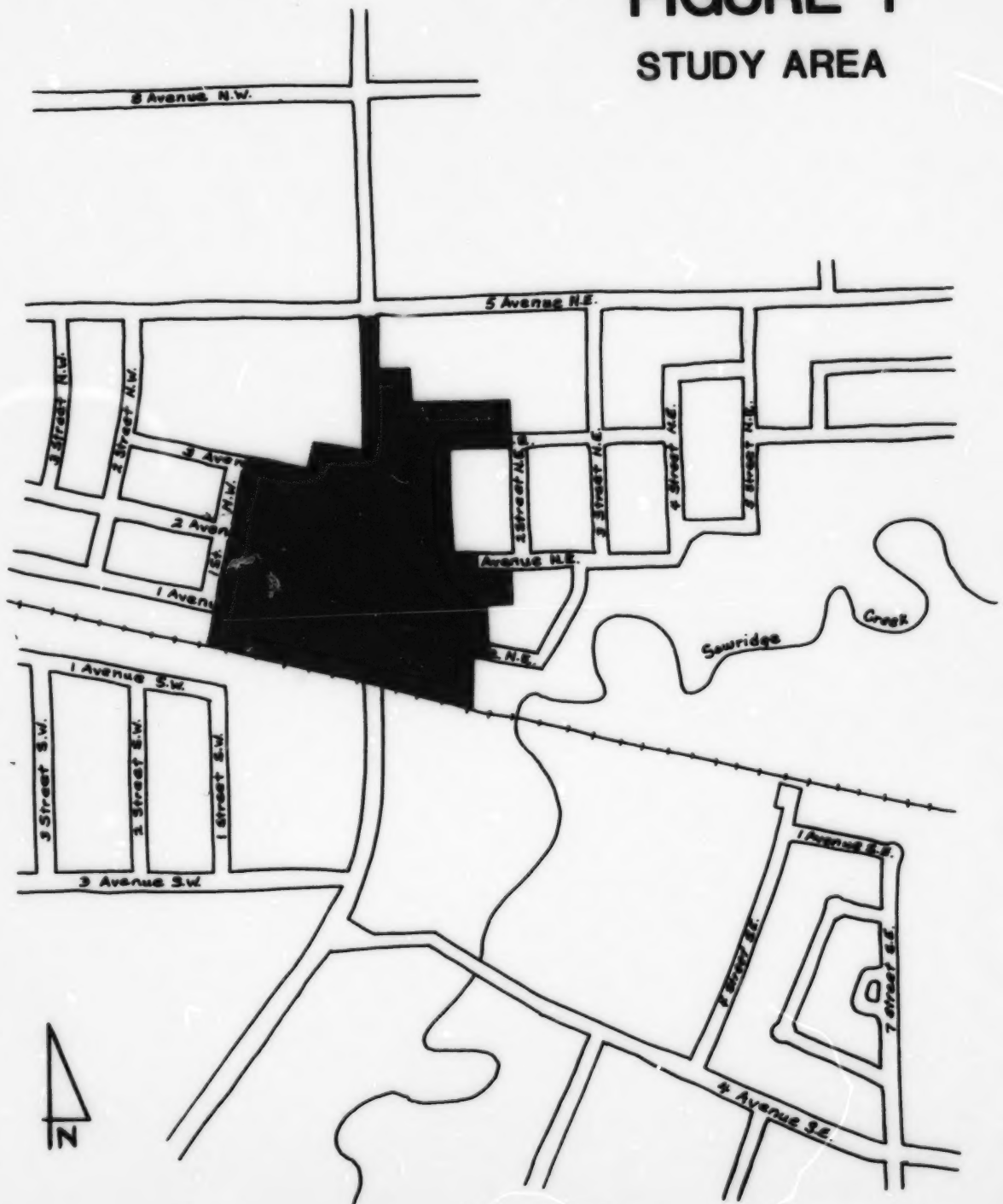
Specific data is provided relating to a three day period in June of 1985. Based on the surveys conducted as part of the study, recommendations have been made concerning possible courses of action which the Town could take to improve the parking situation. The decision to implement these recommendations rests ultimately with Town Council.

2.0 STUDY AREA

The boundaries of the study area were established after considering the location of existing commercial uses, zoning, and community perceptions of the limits of the downtown area.

The study area generally includes the blocks between 1st Street West and 2nd Street East, extending north from the Canadian National Railway line to 5th Avenue North. The majority of Slave Lake's retail office, government and administrative services are located within this area, which is outlined in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1
STUDY AREA



3.0 APPROACH

3.1 Timing

The parking useage surveys were conducted on June 27, 28 and 29, 1985. These dates were selected to coincide with a month end pay period, as this would represent a peak time in downtown business activity, and thus the maximum demand for parking space.

The parking volumes experienced on the Thursday (June 27) were considered to be typical, while the Friday (June 28) was considered busier than normal. The Saturday (June 29) was a relatively quiet day, due to the outflow of local residents for the Canada Day long weekend. In evaluating the survey results, it could be said that the parking system experienced peak use on Friday, June 28.

3.2 Technique

Two types of surveys were used to measure parking useage. A licence plate survey was undertaken to provide data on occupancy, while a "time-in/time-out" survey provided information on vehicle turnover rates and long-term parking.

3.2.1 License Plate Survey

This survey required the surveyor to record vehicle licence plate numbers for vehicles observed in parking spaces along an assigned route. The survey was conducted on an hourly basis on Thursday (9 a.m. to 8 p.m.), Friday (9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.) and Saturday (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.). In cases where the same vehicle was noted in a particular parking space over several hours, instances of long term parking were recorded. Special notations were made to differentiate cars from trucks, vans, recreational vehicles, and out-of-province vehicles. This survey provided important information regarding parking occupancy rates in the downtown.

3.2.2 Time-in/Time-out Survey

This survey was conducted on Friday (from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.) on the east side of Main Street (Macleod's and Home Hardware blocks) and in the Boisvert's Foods lot. By recording the arrival and departure times of all vehicles in parking spaces in these high use areas, detailed information was gathered concerning parking space useage and turnover rates.

3.3 Research Focus

By conducting the parking useage surveys, data was gathered which would help to identify the town's parking issues/problems by answering these questions:

1. What is the mix between cars, trucks, vans, and R.V.'s?
2. Where is long-term parking occurring?
3. What is the occupancy rate for each block/parking lot/parking area?
4. Which parking areas are at or near capacity at peak hours?
5. What are the peak hours/days?

3.4 Parking Supply

3.4.1 Actual Supply

An inventory of available parking was taken by inspecting streets, lanes and properties located within the study area. In many cases, actual parking stalls were not marked by painted lines or other means. Where stall markings did not exist, the number of spaces was determined by pacing off the stalls, accounting for factors such as driveways, crosswalks, loading zones and fire hydrants. Spaces in unmarked parking lots were calculated based on observed parking patterns, allowing adequate room for access by an average sized vehicle. Lane parking was estimated in a similar fashion.

Parking spaces were allocated into categories according to the following definitions:

- On-street parking - spaces provided in municipal street rights-of-way for use by the general public
- Off-street public - spaces in parking lots provided by the Town for use by the parking general public
- Off-street private - spaces provided in parking lots or adjacent lanes to the rear of parking businesses for the exclusive use of customers and employees

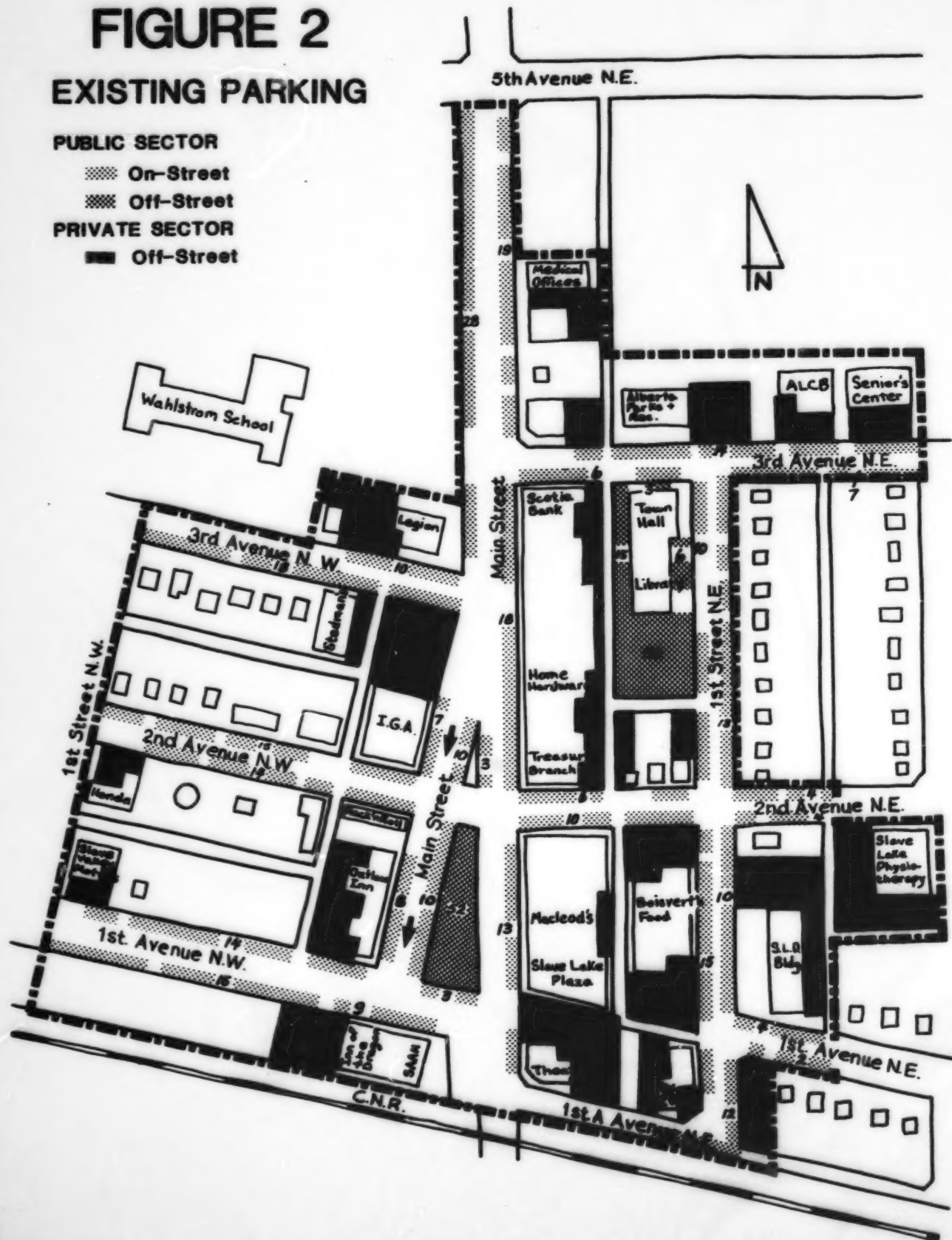
A summary of the total parking spaces available in the study area is presented in Table 1. Parking stall locations are identified on Figure 2. (Store names have been shown to provide a convenient means of identifying blocks).

TABLE 1

EXISTING PARKING INVENTORY

<u>Public Sector</u>	<u>Stalls</u>	<u>1</u>
On-street	331	36
Off-street	135	15
SUBTOTAL	466	51
<u>Private Sector</u>		
Off-street	442	49
TOTAL	908	100

Off-Street



There is an almost equal split between public and private provision of parking spaces within the study area. The majority of the public stalls (331 out of 466, or 71%) are located on-street as unmarked parallel parking spaces. (Note: there is no on-street angle parking in Slave Lake). The remaining public parking spaces are located in parking lots owned by the Town. These lots are conveniently located adjacent to the Town Hall/Library, and in the island within Main Street.

The private sector provides 49% of the total parking spaces in the study area. Large paved lots are located adjacent to the S.L.D. Building, I.G.A., Slave Lake Plaza, Stedman's and Boisvert's Foods. Gravelled lots are located in various locations, and individual parking spaces within them are generally unmarked. Of the off-street private parking spaces, 70 stalls are located adjacent to lanes at the rear of businesses throughout the study area.

Although located within the study area, the 24 spaces in the parking lot being developed on the lot between the Outlaw Inn and the Rack'n Roll Building were excluded from the inventory, as the lot was not available for use during the time of the survey. Similarly, 10 on-street spaces in front of Wahlstrom School, as well as 30 off-street spaces in the school's parking lot, were excluded from the inventory. Although these spaces were adjacent to the study area, they are generally occupied during school hours and are not available for use by the general public.

3.4.2 Existing Parking vs Bylaw Requirements

By applying the parking standards set out in the Town of Slave Lake Land Use Bylaw, a comparison can be made between the existing supply of parking and the theoretical requirements for existing development.

All of the study area is zoned as part of the Central Commercial (C1) District, in which a maximum of 80% of any site may be covered by a building. Although the bylaw has different parking requirements for various uses, the requirement for a typical downtown office or retail outlet would be one parking space per 46 square metres of gross leasable floor area. Applying these requirements to existing commercially developed lands in the study area, the Town's Land Use Bylaw would require 902 parking spaces.

The existing supply in the study area (908 spaces) is only slightly greater than the requirements of the bylaw. However, it should be noted that the existing supply includes 331 on-street spaces (36% of the total supply). Without the "buffer" provided by on-street parking, there would be a shortage of approximately 325 parking spaces, according to bylaw requirements.

Although Slave Lake has relatively stringent parking standards compared to other municipalities, it is not a typical centre in that it does not have a large surrounding agricultural population to service. Parking demands in the downtown are generated almost solely by residents of the Town, or nearby centres such as Canyon Creek, with some minor influences from more distant centres such as Wabasca-Desmarais. The shortage of parking spaces is thus much less than it would be if Slave Lake was situated in a more densely settled agricultural region.

4.0 ANALYSIS

4.1 Comparison with other Towns

Parking studies which have been completed for other towns in Alberta have shown that common problems exist throughout the province with respect to parking. Some of the trends noted in various towns were:

- certain key locations of on-street parking were in heavy demand during peak business times
- off-street parking lots located close to peak demand areas were underutilized
- the amount of off-street parking provided by development fell short of the requirements in the Land Use Bylaw
- long term on-street parking was observed in peak demand areas
- on-street parking facilities served a larger proportion of total demand than they constituted of the total supply.

These observations generally held true for Slave Lake, with the exception of the last item. On-street spaces comprise 36% of the total parking supply, but attracted only 30% of the demand over the three day survey period. This is likely due to the effect of the Main Street parking lot on overall statistics. The Town's lot in the Main Street "island" is very convenient and heavily used.

4.2 Occupancy Rates

The Licence Plate Survey provided information on overall parking occupancy rates of each block, parking lot or zone within the study area. Parking areas which were at occupancy levels of 85% or more are considered to be operating at or near capacity. A figure of 85% is used rather than 100% to allow for inefficient use of space and drivers' perceptions.

The analysis of occupancy rates is based on the peak demand times observed during the three day survey period. Parking demands can fluctuate greatly over a short time period, as demonstrated in parking areas adjacent to restaurants. (For example, the lot next to the Inn of the Dragon was 69% full at 1 p.m. on Thursday, but was only 34% full at 2 p.m. following the departure of lunch time customers). This study places more importance on peak demand statistics, as they indicate crisis points in the operation of the overall parking system. By observing the peak statistics, the system can be viewed when it is operating at peak demand.

During the survey period, a total of 22 separate counts were made. Examination of the data which was collected shows that the busiest times observed were at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday (51% occupancy) and 3:00 p.m. on Friday (59% occupancy). Figures 3 and 4 illustrate the occupancy rates observed at these peak times, and illustrates peak demand areas.

FIGURE 3

PEAK HOUR OCCUPANCY RATES (%)

Thursday, June 27, 1985 1:00p.m.

◇ Parking Areas at Optimum Capacity

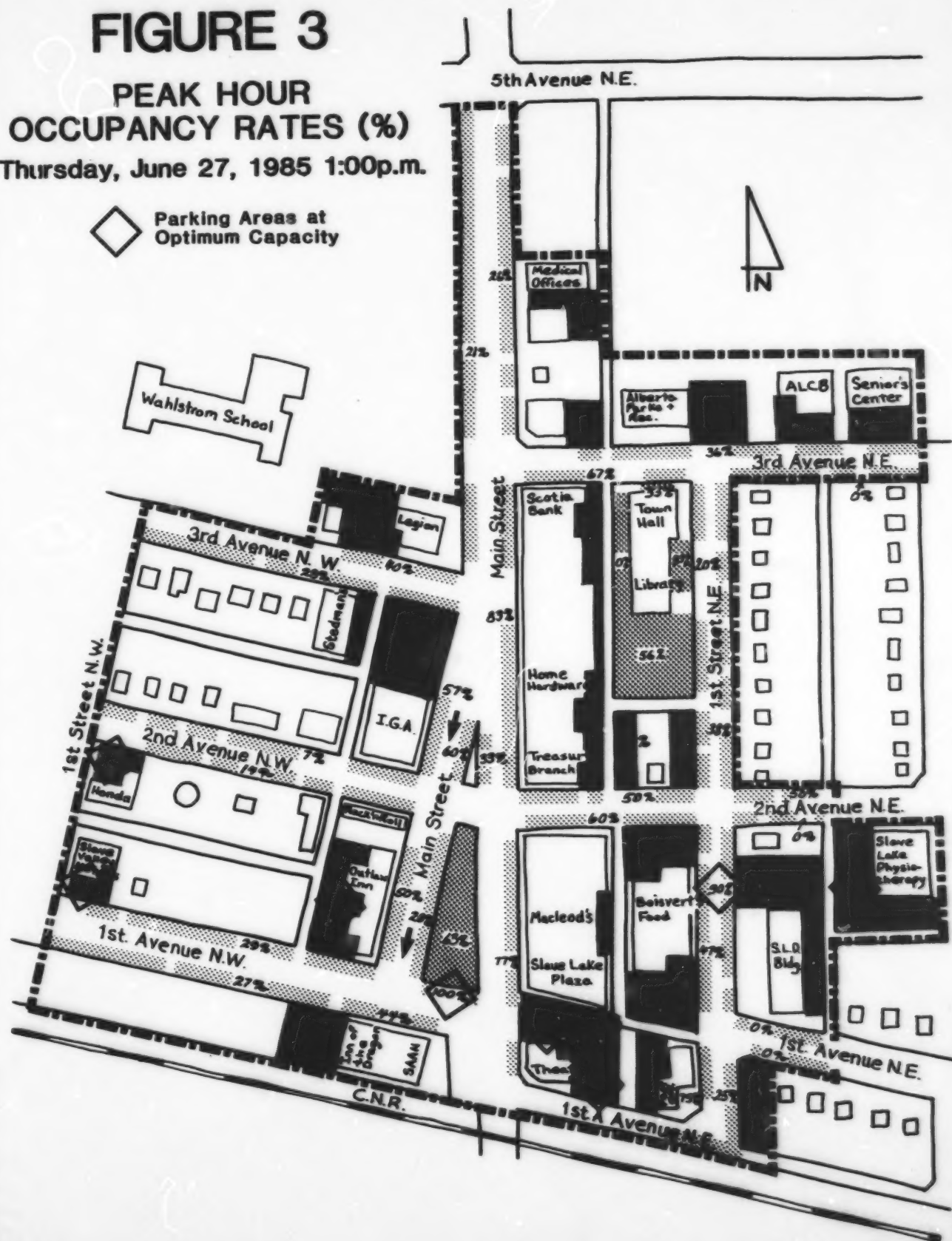
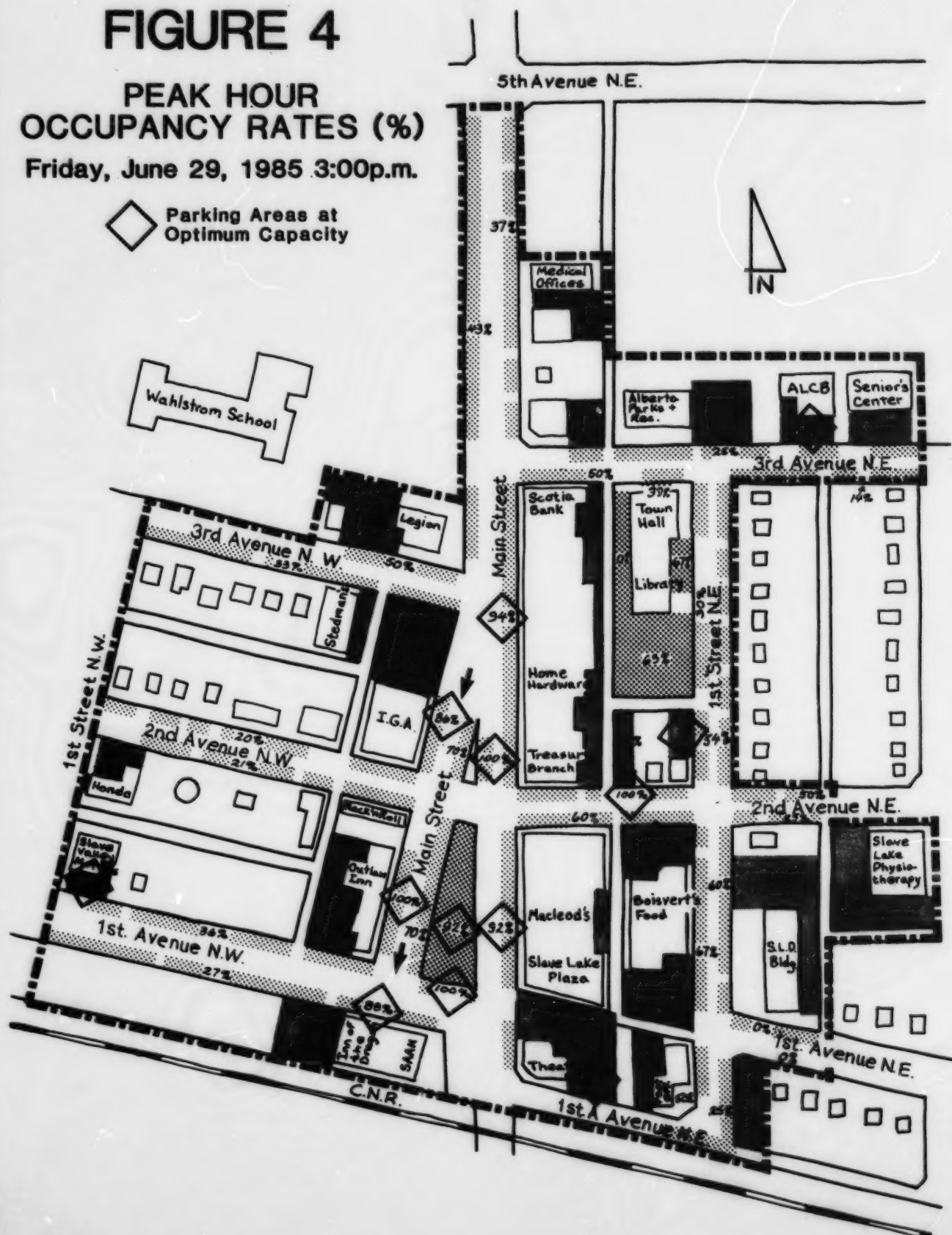


FIGURE 4

PEAK HOUR OCCUPANCY RATES (%)

Friday, June 29, 1985 3:00p.m.

◊ Parking Areas at Optimum Capacity



4.2.1 On-street Parking

On-street parking was observed at optimum capacity for the blocks fronting onto the east and west sides of Main Street between the railway and 3rd Avenue North. These areas, not surprisingly, contain the greatest concentration of retail development in the study area. Several key parking lots (Main Street Town lot, Boisvert's Foods, Slave Lake Plaza) were also over 85% full. Other locations, though shown at optimum capacity are not as significant as they appear on the maps. (For example, the A.L.C.B. lot, although 93% full, experiences rapid turnover of parking spaces due to the short nature of shopping trips to the vendors).

The peak demand area for on-street parking can be defined as the blocks fronting onto Main Street between the railway and 3rd Avenue North, and the portion of 2nd Avenue North between Main Street and 1st Street East (see Figure 5). It is in this area that parking appears to be in short supply.

The data indicates that on-street parking in the blocks immediately adjacent to this peak demand area had low occupancy rates. From casual observation, shoppers appear reluctant to walk more than a half block from the store in which they wish to shop.

4.2.2 Off-street Parking

4.2.2.1 Laneways

Occupancy rates of spaces adjacent to lanes in the areas to the rear of businesses fronting on Main Street ranged from 56% to 75%. These spaces are being used wherever possible by store owners or employees. The capacity and use of these areas would likely increase if they were better maintained.

4.2.2.2 Parking Lots

The Town-owned lot on Main Street was 92% full at 3:00 p.m. on Friday. The lot was extremely busy, and drivers were observed to be waiting in their vehicles for a space to become empty. Several cases of drivers parking in aisles within the lot were noted.

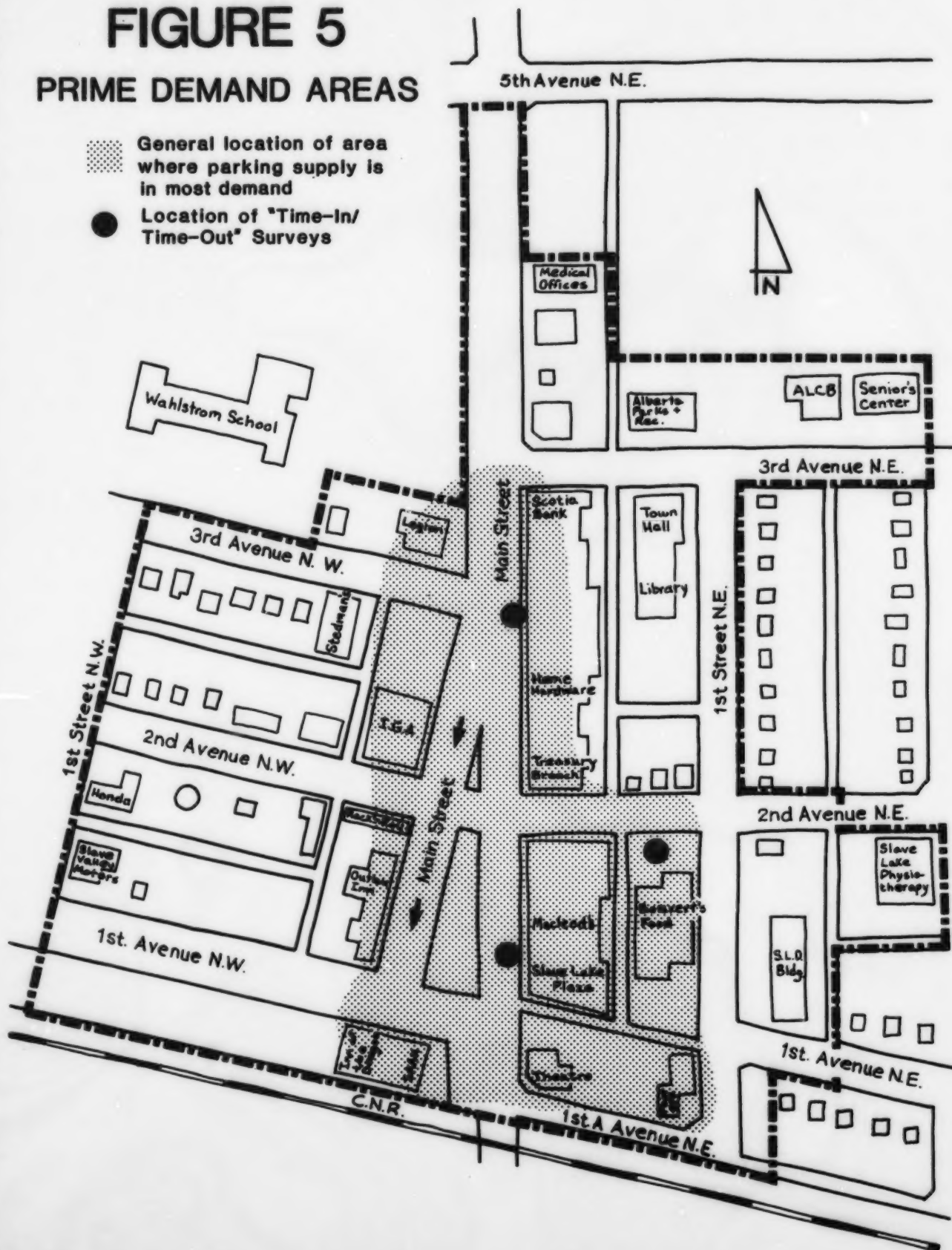
The other Town-owned lot, adjacent to the Town Hall/Library was only 63% full at 3:00 p.m. on Friday. In spite of its convenient location, this lot was not as heavily utilized as the Main Street lot.

Several private lots were operating at capacity at the peak times. The lots at Boisvert's Foods, Slave Lake Musical Theatre, and the Slave Lake Plaza were over 85% full at 3:00 p.m. on Friday. The I.G.A./Stedman's lots were nearing capacity. Generally speaking, the paved, conveniently located lots were in high demand.

FIGURE 5

PRIME DEMAND AREAS

- General location of area where parking supply is in most demand
- Location of "Time-In/Time-Out" Surveys



4.3 General Occupancy Observations

The occupancy level experienced at the busiest time studied (59% at 3:00 p.m. Friday) indicates that there is no overall shortage of parking in the study area. However, there is a shortage of parking within that portion of the downtown, identified in Figure 5.

From the licence plate survey results, it is evident that the parking system is operating at or near capacity in the prime demand area along Main Street north to 3rd Avenue. Although a considerable amount of parking is available along side streets (within one block of Main Street) and in the Town Hall/Library lot, these areas are underutilized.

As is the case in most towns in Alberta, shoppers want to park their vehicle as close as possible to their destination, and are reluctant to walk even a short distance. The most convenient parking areas in Slave Lake are thus in high demand.

The perceived shortage is further aggravated by the frequent inefficient use of existing parking spaces, particularly in the high demand areas. This problem was observed along Main Street and in the Slave Lake Plaza/Musical Theatre lots, where parking spaces are not identified. Moreover, it should be noted that trucks, vans and R.V.'s comprised 41% of all vehicles observed during the study. The size of these vehicles often caused inefficient use of parking spaces, where one vehicle occupied enough room for two vehicles to park. The effect of poorly marked parking spaces is that the actual parking supply is reduced because of inefficient parking patterns.

4.4 Long Term Parking and Turnover Rates

In addition to examining occupancy rates, the parking useage surveys provided information concerning the length of time that vehicles were parked.

Persons parking for less than 2 hours are considered to be short term parkers. They are usually involved in activities such as convenience shopping, short term appointments or errands. Long term parking (over 2 hours) usually indicates parking by employees or persons on special purpose trips requiring a longer time period.

The licence plate survey gave an indication of where long term parking was occurring. Ideally, the peak demand areas should be reserved for use by short term parkers. Long term parking should be directed to other areas, such as side streets, laneways, or off-street parking lots.

In Slave Lake, 511 parking spaces (56% of the 908 total) fall outside the prime demand area (shown on Figure 5) and are considered suitable for long term parking. Based on the licence plate survey data the percentage of total long term parkers (LTP) who parked in areas suitable for long term parking (LTA) was calculated as follows:

	<u>Total LTP</u>	<u>LTP in LTA</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Thursday	263	174	66%
Friday	283	156	55%
Saturday	<u>117</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>56%</u>
Total	<u>663</u>	<u>395</u>	<u>60%</u>

On average, 60% of all long term parkers parked in areas suitable for that purpose. Although this is a significant majority, it should be noted that 40% of long term parking is occurring in areas not suitable for that purpose. Long term parkers are an important part of the peak hour congestion problem in the downtown area.

The "time-in/time out" survey provided detailed information on parking use at three high demand locations (Figure 5). The survey was conducted on Friday, June 28, 1985 between 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. on two blocks on the east side of Main Street (Macleod's and Home Hardware Blocks) and the Boisvert's Foods lot. The results of the survey are summarized in Table 2.

TABLE 2
TIME-IN/TIME OUT SURVEY RESULTS

	<u>Macleod's Block</u>	<u>Home Hardware Block</u>	<u>Boisvert's Foods Lot</u>
Number of Parking Spaces	13	18	23
Number of Vehicle Parked	44	68	131
Vehicles Parked per Space	3.4	3.8	5.7
Average Time Parked (Minutes)	25.5	24.8	15.4
Length of Stay			
0-14 minutes	21 (48%)	40 (59%)	79 (60%)
15-29 minutes	13 (30%)	13 (19%)	35 (37%)
30-44 minutes	3 (7%)	5 (7%)	12 (9%)
45-59 minutes	2 (5%)	2 (3%)	4 (3%)
Under 1 hours	39 (88.6%)	60 (88.2%)	130 (99.3%)
1 hour to 2 hours	2 (4.5%)	3 (4.4%)	1 (0.7%)
Over 2 hours	3 (6.8%)	5 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)
Percentage of Total Parking Spaces Occupied by Long-Term Parkers	<u>23.1%</u>	<u>27.8%</u>	<u>0.0%</u>

The Macleod's and Home Hardware blocks on Main Street were heavily used (112 vehicles) during the two hour survey period. Although individual parking spaces may have been vacant on occasion, the turnover rates (approximately 25 minutes average time parked) indicate that spaces are filled soon after they become empty.

The most important statistics in Table 2 relate to long term parking. Although only a total of 8 vehicles parked for more than 2 hours, they occupied 23.1% and 27.8% of available spaces in the Macleod's and Home Hardware blocks. These high demand spaces are not suitable for long term parking. Restricting long term parking would permit more vehicles to have access to these valuable parking spaces.

Long term parking is not a problem in the Boisvert's Foods lot, where the turnover rate (average time parked - 15.4 minutes) indicates that the lot is being used by shoppers for shorter trips.

4.5 Vehicle Mix

Vehicles such as trucks, vans and R.V.'s can create special problems for the parking system due to their size and limited maneuverability. Their large size means that they require large parking spaces and may occupy two parking spaces instead of one. Depending on the proportion of total vehicles which they comprise, an overall parking strategy may either have to account for such vehicles or possibly restrict them in a number of areas. Parking lots can be designed with specific spaces for compact cars or larger vehicles.

The proportion of trucks, vans and R.V.'s observed in Slave Lake over the three day study period are illustrated below:

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
Trucks	32%	33%	39%	34%
Vans	5%	6%	7%	6%
R.V.'s	<u>1%</u>	<u>1%</u>	<u>1%</u>	<u>1%</u>
Total	<u>38%</u>	<u>40%</u>	<u>47%</u>	<u>41%</u>

Overall, 41% of vehicles in Slave Lake are either a truck, van or R.V. This is a considerable proportion of the total vehicles, and confirms that larger vehicles require special consideration. Surveyors frequently observed trucks parked on Main Street occupying enough space for 1 1/2 to 2 cars.

4.6 Out-of-Province Vehicles

Only 1.6% of all vehicles observed were from outside Alberta, mainly from Saskatchewan and British Columbia. These vehicles do not have any significant impact on the downtown parking system. However, their numbers could be used as an indication of the importance of tourism on the Town's economy.

4.7 Summary of Findings

There is a shortage of off-street parking provided by existing development in the study area. However, considering the amount of on-street parking, a small overall surplus exists. A shortage exists within a prime demand area located adjacent to Main Street (between the railway and 3rd Avenue North), where much of the business activity in the downtown occurs. Specific parking areas located in this zone are operating at maximum capacity at times, while nearby spaces within convenient walking distance remain available.

Turnover rates observed for parking spaces in high demand areas were considered by researchers to be acceptable. However, long term parking is occurring in these key areas, and is reducing the overall parking capacity of the downtown. Long term parking was observed in the Town-owned Main Street lot, in the Slave Lake Plaza lot, and along portions of Main Street.

Larger vehicles such as trucks and vans form a significant proportion of all vehicles in Slave Lake. The lack of parking stall markings on-street and in some parking lots leads to inefficient use of spaces. Upgrading and improvements to existing parking lots would result in increased capacity and useage. The layout and design of several lots, particularly those at the Slave Lake Plaza and the Town Library, could be improved. Access and signage for several lots should be changed to make them easier to find and use.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the survey results and analysis of the data gathered, the following are recommendations for immediate (short term) and future (longer term) actions:

5.1 Time Limits

The Town should adopt a bylaw to implement a parking time limits (9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday) for the prime demand areas as shown in Figure 6.

The intent of this action is to relocate long term parkers away from the high demand areas so that spaces are made available for use by downtown shoppers. Signs should be erected indicating the time restrictions. The time limits should be enforced by the Town's Bylaw Enforcement Officer.

The use of time limits will be the most effective means of redirecting long term parkers (to unrestricted areas) and increasing the use of existing stalls in the prime demand area. Alternative measures, such as the introduction of parking meters, could also be used to discourage long term parking. While meters will generate some revenue for the Town, their initial capital costs and ongoing maintenance costs, combined with probable public opposition to parking meters, make the use of time limits the more attractive choice.

A two hour time limit should be used in most areas, as this will provide adequate time for average shopping trips or errands. A 15 minute time limit should be used for on-street spaces adjacent to the Post Office, as this is a high demand area. The 15 minute limit should be adequate for persons picking up their mail or posting a letter.

5.2 Long Term Parking Areas

Areas should be allocated for use by long term parkers as shown on Figure 6.

Long term parkers should be directed to the Town lot adjacent to the library, and to side streets adjacent to the downtown. This could be accomplished by implementing time restriction (see 5.1 above) and by posting signs in public and private lots governing their use. Storeowners should encourage employees to park their vehicles in the areas behind the stores along Main Street in cases where this is not already occurring. The owners of the Slave Lake Plaza should determine the source of long term parking in their parking lot. If possible, alternative arrangements for long term parkers should be made with the owners of the lot opposite the Post Office. Relocating long term parkers would increase parking availability in the Slave Lake Plaza lot for customers of stores located in the plaza, and would reduce the present congestion in this area.

5.3 Improvements to Existing Parking Lots

The Town should encourage the owners of existing parking lots to provide hard surfacing, painted stall markings, landscaping and other improvements to provide a better level of service to downtown patrons.

FIGURE 6

RECOMMENDATIONS: Short Term Actions

- ▬▬▬▬ Two Hour Parking Limit
- ▬▬▬▬ Long Term Parking Lots
- 15 Minute Parking Limit
- ◻ Directional/Information Signs

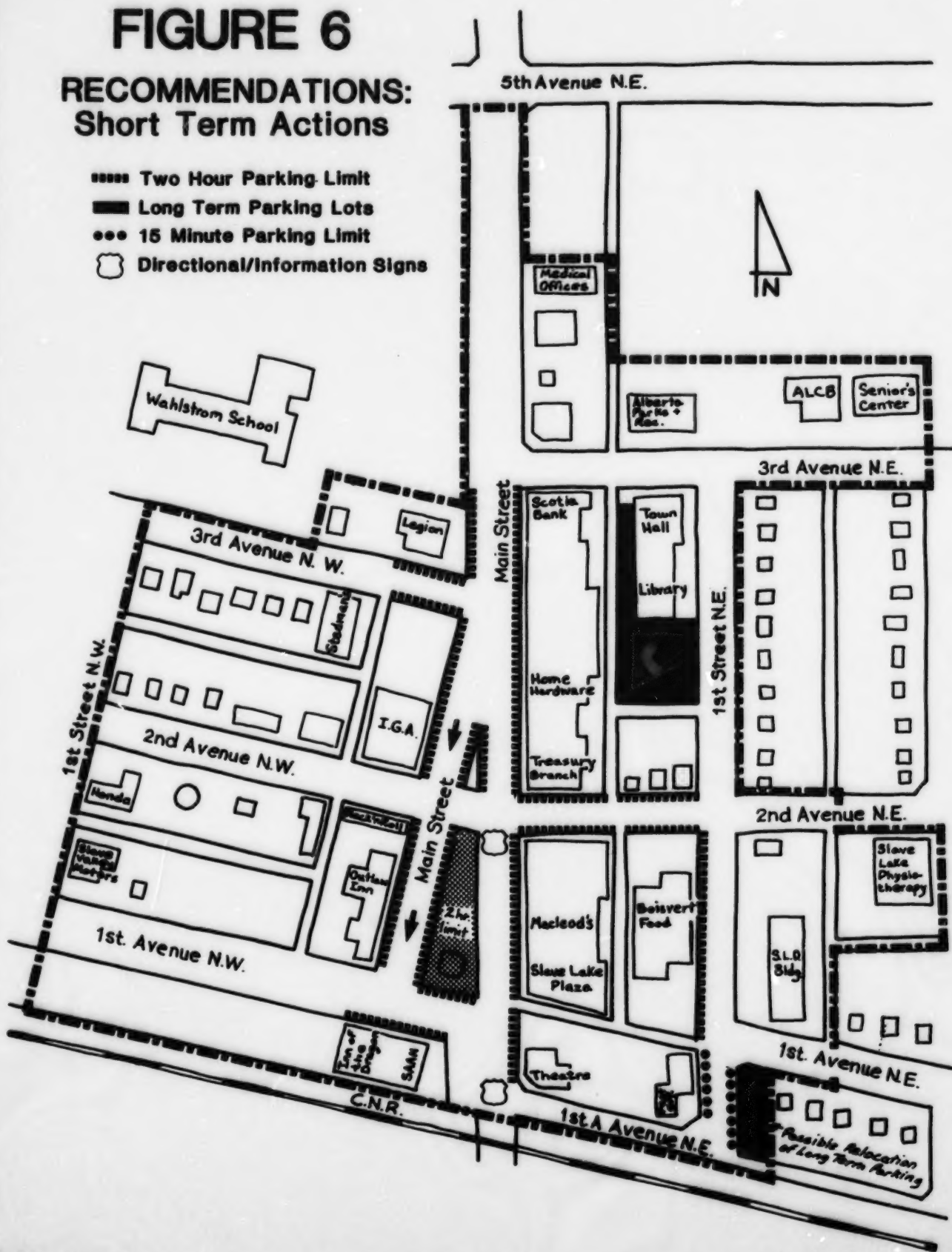
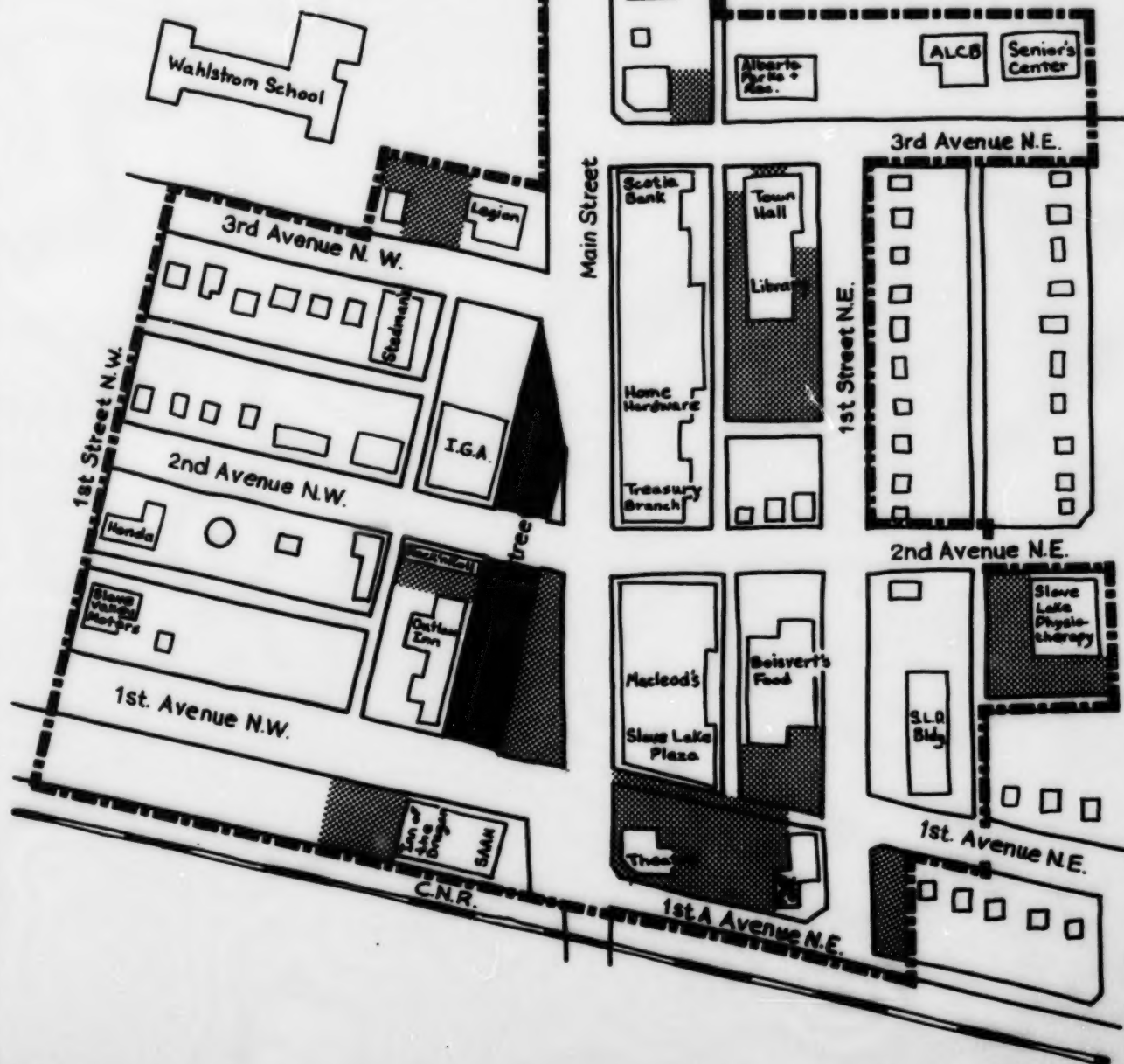


FIGURE 7

RECOMMENDATIONS: Longer Term Actions

-  Possible Road Closure for Expansion of Parking Lots (to be considered in conjunction with Main Street improvements)
-  Improvements to existing lots (surfacing, marking, accesses)



5.4 Town Library Lot

The Town should redesign parking stall layout in the library lot to maximize its capacity. A prominent information sign should be erected indicating that the lot is available for use by the general public for both short and long term parking.

5.5 Main Street Parking Lot

The Town should examine the layout of and access into the Main Street lot.

This lot is among the best maintained lots in the downtown area. However, it can be a frustrating experience to use this parking lot for those unfamiliar with it, as there is no direct access from Main Street. To drive into the lot, a driver must enter from the one way southbound leg of Main Street in front of the Outlaw Inn.

The Town should consider closing the one way portion of Main Street between the Main Street lot and the Outlaw Inn, and incorporating the former street into an expanded parking lot. Similarly, the street could be closed between the small traffic island park in Main Street and the I.G.A. Store, and additional parking spaces developed. Such improvements should be considered in conjunction with contemplated changes to Main Street (widening, access points).

5.6 Signage

5.6.1 Town Lots

The Town should consider erecting directional/information signs in the downtown for public parking lots.

Existing signs do not provide adequate directions to the Town's parking lots on Main Street and south of the library. Prominent signs should be placed at the entrance to the downtown area to guide vehicles to these lots. Signs should also be erected in the lots to regulate their use.

5.6.2 Private Lots

The owners of private parking lots should be encouraged to erect signs governing the use of these lots.

Very few private parking lots have signs indicating that their use is reserved for customer parking. Signs providing such information (e.g. "2 Hour Customer Parking - Boisvert's Foods") would be useful. Signs could also be erected at the rear of stores where they do not already exist (e.g. "Macleod's Parking Only") in order to reserve laneway spaces for store parking.

5.7 On-Street Parking

The Town should introduce painted stall markings for on-street parking spaces.

Although such markings would be under snow cover for part of the year, they would assist drivers to make more efficient use of parking spaces.

5.8 Parking Levy Bylaw

The Town should adopt a parking levy bylaw to provide for collection of money-in-lieu-of parking in cases where development cannot meet on-site parking requirements.

The Town presently has no mechanism in place for collecting funds to acquire and develop off-street parking lots. Although the ideal situation would be to have the required parking spaces provided "on-site" by each development. This is not always possible. The intent of money-in-lieu contributions for parking is for the Town to undertake provision and development of parking lots to provide parking spaces to serve public demands. The Town must ensure that any parking lot which it develops is properly located to meet public needs.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

This study has gathered information which will be of use to the Town of Slave Lake in developing an action plan to deal with downtown parking concerns. The parking "problem" in downtown Slave Lake can be remedied through cooperation between the Town and the downtown merchants.

The recommendations of this study include both immediate and longer term courses of action which can be taken. The Town should try to implement several of the short term actions first (eg. time limits; signage) and should evaluate their effects prior to undertaking major capital cost items.

It is hoped that this study has helped to provide insight into the parking issue and that it will lead to further discussion and eventual resolution of the issues.